

**Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
Nelson J. Sabatini, Secretary**

**Community Health Administration  
Diane Matuszak, M.D., M.P.H., Director**



**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** July 3, 2003

**H.O. Memo #03-048**

**To:** Health Officers  
Directors of Nursing  
Communicable Disease Directors  
Environmental Health Directors

**From:** Melinda Blackburn, MPH, Epidemiologist  
Division of Communicable Disease Surveillance

**Through:** David Blythe, MD, MPH  
State Epidemiologist (Acting)

**Re:** **Increase in Legionnaires' Disease**

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Maryland has experienced an increase in reports of Legionnaires' disease (LD) this year. There were 45 cases (both confirmed and suspect) reported during the first six months of 2003. Twenty of the 45 cases occurred in June. In comparison, the average number of LD cases reported during the first six months for calendar years 2000 through 2002 was 18. The number of cases to date has more than doubled compared to the past three years. Jurisdictions that normally report LD have been reporting more cases along with counties that rarely see LD.

So far, the results of the investigations that were conducted by the local health departments have not revealed any epidemiological links between the cases. This increase may simply reflect an increase in sporadic cases. However, to facilitate epidemiological investigations between jurisdictions, the Department of Mental Health and Hygiene (DHMH) is asking all of the local health departments to continue to promptly report and investigate all new cases of LD. Please report cases by calling Melinda Blackburn, in the Division of Communicable Disease Surveillance at 410-767-1244, as well as entering the case into MERSS. DHMH has created a questionnaire to use as a tool to aid you in determining possible sources of exposure. In addition to completing the CDC case report form, please fill out and fax the attached questionnaire immediately to 410-669-4215. Until further notice, please continue to complete the additional questionnaire for all future cases.

## **Attachments**

**Hard copies mailed to CD Directors only.**

cc: J. Krick  
D. Matuszak  
R. Stringer  
J. DeBoy  
A. Stephenson